

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 EA-09 PA-02 PRS-01

AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08

FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00

ACDA-10 IO-13 NRC-07 /140 W

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R 071049Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2656

ERDA HQ WASHDC

ERDA HQ GERMANTOWN

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. J1652: N/A

TAGS: TECHPFOR ENRG UK US

SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS REACTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S  
NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENT

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT CARTER'S NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENT HAS ELICITED SUBSTANTIAL PRESS SUPPORT FOR ITS NON-PROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES TEMPERED BY EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN FOR ITS POSSIBLY NEGATIVE EFFECT UPON FAST BREEDER REACTOR PROGRAMS WHICH VARIOUS WESTERN COUNTRIES AND JAPAN EXPECT TO RELY ON HEAVILY TO ENSURE ADEQUATE FUTURE ENERGY SUPPLIES. BRITAIN'S PARTICULAR INTEREST IN ENSURING THAT ITS FUEL REPROCESSING FACILITIES FOR DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS CAN OPERATE WITHOUT INTERFERENCE RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION. VIRTUALLY ALL COMMENT STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE AND DESIRABILITY OF PURSUING A COLLECTIVE INTERNATIONAL EFFORT TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS POSED FOR NUCLEAR SUPPLIER AND OTHER NATIONS BY THE U.S. POLICY INITIATIVE. END SUMMARY.

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2. APRIL 9 "TIMES" EDITORIAL OBSERVED THAT THE DORMANT ISSUE OF NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION BADLY NEEDED STIRRING UP. THE "TIMES" SUGGESTS HOWEVER IT IS HEROIC BUT UNREALISTIC TO SUPPOSE THE DRIFT TOWARD PROLIFERATION CAN BE STOPPED BY A GENERAL ABANDONMENT OF FAST BREEDER TECHNOLOGY. IN ADDITION TO THE ALREADY INTERNATIONALLY

AGREED MEASURES TO CONTROL THE EXPORT OF NUCLEAR PLANT AND TECHNOLOGY, FULL ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES FOR ALL FISSILE MATERIAL IN CIVIL USE; AN INTERNATIONAL INSPECTORATE EMPOWERED TO MONITOR THESE PROVISIONS. THERE PERHAPS MAY BE ADDED AN ABANDONMENT OF COMPETITIVE RIVALRY FOR CONTRACTS AMONG THE NUCLEAR SUPPLYING NATIONS IN THE INTEREST OF FIRM INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS. IT IS A LEAKY SYSTEM AT THE BEST OF TIMES BUT IT WILL HAVE TO SERVE UNTIL THERE IS BETTER ASSURANCE THAT FAST BREEDER REACTORS ARE A STEP IN ENERGY DEVELOPMENT THAT CAN BE OMITTED WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING SUPPLY TO MEET THE PERCEIVED NEEDS OF THE GREATER MAJORITY OF MANKIND. THE "TIMES" CONCLUDES THAT MR. CARTER HAS MOST OPPORTUNELY BROUGHT THIS ISSUE TO THE FORE AND IF HIS INITIATIVE IS NOT TO GROW COLD THE SOUNDINGS WHICH HE HAS ALREADY TAKEN IN MOSCOW, TOKYO AND BONN MUST BE EXTENDED AND FORMALIZED INTO MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATION.

3. APRIL 10 "SUNDAY TIMES" EDITORIAL NOTED THE CAUSE OF NONPROLIFERATION CONCERNS PRESIDENT CARTER DEEPLY, AS IT SHOULD, THAT THE U.S. IS THE MAJOR FREE WORLD PRODUCER OF NUCLEAR FUEL AND SUPPLIER OF URANIUM-BASED NUCLEAR POWER GENERATION SYSTEMS, CONSEQUENTLY FOR ALL NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION WASHINGTON HAS A MAJOR HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY, DIRECT OR INDIRECT. "SUNDAY TIMES" GOES ON TO SAY HOWEVER THAT WASHINGTON HAS A COMMERCIAL INTEREST IN THE RESTRAINTS THE PRESIDENT NOW SEEKS TO IMPOSE AND IT LOOKS UPON HIS STATEMENT THEREFORE MORE AS AN OPENING CONTRIBUTION TO NEW INTERNATIONAL POLICY

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MAKING THAN AS A DEFINITIVE AND INFLEXIBLE ASSERTION OF AMERICAN INTEREST. THIS IS THE WAY PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN HAS TAKEN IT: HIS RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT, THOUGH WELCOMING, IS STRICTLY NONCOMMITAL ON BRITISH NUCLEAR POLICY. THE SUBJECT MUST COMMAND A HIGH PLACE ON THE AGENDA OF NEXT MONTH'S WESTERN SUMMIT.

4. APRIL 11 "GUARDIAN" EDITORIAL STATES THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO STOP WORK ON IMPORTANT PARTS OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM LEAVES LARGE QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF ENERGY SUPPLIES. AT ITS BEST AND MOST HOPEFUL IT AIMS TO STIMULATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES. AND UNLESS IT DOES THAT IT IS ONLY A POSTPONEMENT OF THE PLUTONIUM SOCIETY, NOT ITS ABANDONMENT. THE EQUATION WHICH THE NATIONS INTENDING TO RELY ON NUCLEAR POWER MUST COLLECTIVELY WORK OUT IS WHETHER THE AVAILABLE URANIUM ALONE WILL SERVE THEIR NEEDS UNTIL ALTERNATIVE SOURCES ARE DEVELOPED AND UNLESS THE ALTERNATIVE SOURCES ARE GIVEN A

HUGE PUSH THIS EQUATION WILL NOT WORK OUT TO ANYBODY'S  
SATISFACTION. TO BE SUCCESSFUL, THE CARTER STRATEGY

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MUST ENTAIL A HEFTY R AND D PROGRAM FOR WAVE AND SOLAR  
POWER. SOME SKEPTICISM MUST IN ANY CASE BE ALLOWED  
ABOUT THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THESE SYSTEMS AND IT  
SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT EUROPE AT LEAST WILL BE ABLE TO  
ESCAPE ALTOGETHER FROM THE PLUTONIUM ECONOMY WHICH THE  
UNITED STATES HAS FORESWORN. SOME CONFLICT IS THEREFORE  
INEVITABLE BETWEEN BRITAIN, FRANCE AND GERMANY ON ONE  
SIDE AND THE UNITED STATES ON THE OTHER. IT WILL NOT  
BE CONFINED TO THE FAST BREEDER REACTOR BUT WILL PRO-  
LIFERATE INTO OXIDE REPROCESSING IN WHICH BRITISH AND  
FRENCH TECHNOLOGY IS AHEAD OF AMERICAN. MR. CARTER'S  
BOLD POLICY STATEMENT THUS DOES WELL TO DIRECT INTER-  
NATIONAL EFFORTS TOWARDS SOLVING THE FORTHCOMING ENERGY  
CRISIS BY NOVEL MEANS; BUT IT CREATES MANY MORE PROBLEMS  
THAN IT SOLVES.

5. APRIL 10 "SUNDAY OBSERVER" EDITORIAL SAID PRESIDENT  
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CARTER HAS ACTED BRAVELY AND CONSISTENTLY IN DECIDING TO POSTPONE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR POWER REPROCESSING AND THE FAST BREEDER REACTOR. THE DECISION WILL GREATLY ENHANCE HIS STANDING IN HIS ATTEMPT TO SLOW THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS FOR HE IS NOW IN A POSITION TO ARGUE THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS VOLUNTARILY FORESWORN THE VERY TECHNOLOGIES HE IS TRYING TO DENY TO THE THIRD WORLD. THE RISK PRESIDENT CARTER IS RUNNING IS THAT THE PRICE OF URANIUM WILL SOAR SO HIGH AS TO MAKE NUCLEAR POWER WITHOUT THE FAST BREEDER UNCOMPETITIVE AND AT THE SAME TIME THAT DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY WILL RISE AND STOCKS OF FOSSILE FUELS FALL.

6. ACCOMPANYING ARTICLE BY DIRECTOR OF STUDIES AT ROYAL INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IAN SMART STATES QUESTIONS ARE RAISED NOT ONLY ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN NUCLEAR INDUSTRY BUT ALSO ABOUT THE FUTURE ENERGY SUPPLIES OF THE WORLD AND NOT LEAST OF WESTERN EUROPE. OTHER GOVERNMENTS EVEN WHEN THEY SHARE TO THE FULL THE PRESIDENT'S WISE DETERMINATION TO CHECK THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WILL BE WEIGHING HIS WORDS AGAINST THE LONGER TERM FEAR THAT THE LAST 15 YEARS OF THIS CENTURY WILL BE CRITICAL ONES FOR ALL OF US. IN WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN TODAY AND EVENTUALLY IN THE UNITED STATES AS WELL WE DO NOT HAVE THE LUXURY OF MULTIPLE CHOICES. AS THE ENERGY CRISIS OF THE 1990S BEARS DOWN WE CANNOT CHOOSE BETWEEN FUELS, OR BETWEEN INCREASING SUPPLY AND REDUCING DEMAND. WE CAN ONLY CHOOSE ALL OF THEM--AND PRAY. WE DO NOT HAVE A PRESENT ENERGY GAP, WE HAVE A POLICY GAP. AND WHAT THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT DEMONSTRATES WITHOUT FULLY RECOGNIZING, IS THAT THE POLICY GAP ON ENERGY, LIKE THE POLICY GAP ON NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, HAS TO BE FILLED INTERNATIONALLY, IN CONCERT, AND NOW.

7. APRIL 9 "GUARDIAN" ARTICLE TERMS PRESIDENT'S NEW

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POLICY TO RESTRICT AMERICAN PRODUCTION OF PLUTONIUM A GRAVE THREAT TO BRITAIN'S EMBRYONIC REPROCESSING INDUSTRY. BRITAIN'S VIEWPOINT WAS EMPHASIZED ONLY LAST WEEK WHEN ENERGY SECRETARY TONY BENN MET DR. SCHLESINGER IN WASHINGTON. DR. SCHLESINGER WAS LEFT IN NO DOUBT THAT BRITAIN HAS TO BE ABLE TO REPROCESS NUCLEAR FUEL, IF ONLY TO COPE WITH THE HIGHLY CORROSIVE FUEL FROM OUR

BRITISH DESIGNED MAGNOX REACTORS. NOR CAN THE REST OF THE WORLD REMAIN UNINTERESTED. IF THE U.S., OWNER OF 45 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S URANIUM, CHOOSES TO BURN IT UP UNPLEASANTLY QUICKLY, WHAT EFFECT WILL THIS HAVE ON THE REST OF THE NUCLEAR WORLD? WILL WE SEE THE EMERGENCE OF A URANIUM OPEC? IN RECENT YEARS URANIUM PRICES HAVE INCREASED SEVERAL TIMES. IF TREND CONTINUES THE ECONOMICS OF NUCLEAR POWER COULD CHANGE BEYOND RECOGNITION, AND PRODUCE A SITUATION WHICH WILL REALLY ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR, WIND AND WAVE ENERGY.

8. APRIL 10 "SUNDAY TIMES" BUSINESS NEWS LEAD STORY REPORTS PRESIDENT CARTER IS PREPARED TO USE AMERICA' POWER AS SUPPLIER OF HALF THE WORLD'S URANIUM TO FORCE OTHER NATIONS TO FOLLOW HIS NEW NONPROLIFERATION POLICY. IN WASHINGTON IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT SUPPLIES OF HIGHLY ENRICHED U.S. URANIUM FUEL TO WEST GERMANY HAVE ALREADY BEEN SUSPENDED; THOUGH NOT THE SLIGHTLY ENRICHED FUEL FOR COMMERCIAL NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS.

9. APRIL 13 "FINANCIAL TIMES" EDITORIAL EMPHASIZED THE DIFFERENCES IN ENERGY RESOURCES BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ITS INDUSTRIALIZED FRIENDS. IT IS NOT SURPRISING

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON  
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THAT THOSE COUNTRIES WITH THE SCARCEST CONVENTIONAL ENERGY RESOURCES TEND TO BE THE MOST INTERESTED IN THE RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR POWER. THEY FORESEE AN ENERGY GAP IN THE 1980S WHICH PERHAPS CAN BE FILLED IN NO OTHER WAY. AS SUCH, THEY OUGHT TO COMPEL AN INTERNATIONAL APPROACH TO THE ENERGY QUESTION, WHICH IN ITS WAY IS QUITE AS SERIOUS AS THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION. IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S PROGRAM HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH SUCH AN APPROACH. THE U.S., ALONG WITH CANADA AND AUSTRALIA WHICH APPEAR READY TO FOLLOW THE CARTER LINE AT PRESENT, HAVE A NEAR MONOPOLY, THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES APART, IN URANIUM PRODUCTION AND ENRICHMENT. IT'S PROPOSING TO CONTINUE EXPORTS BUT ONLY ON CERTAIN CONDITIONS AND WITHOUT HAVING GIVEN MUCH THOUGHT TO WHAT NEAR MONOPOLY CONTROL WILL DO TO THE PRICE. NOT THE LEAST EFFECT OF THIS COULD BE A FRANTIC SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIES. BY UNCLASSIFIED

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IMPLICATION, THEY WOULD INCREASE RATHER THAN REDUCE THE CHANCES OF PROLIFERATION AS OTHER COUNTRIES SOUGHT NOT ONLY THEIR OWN ACCESS TO ENRICHED URANIUM, BUT ALSO THEIR OWN REPROCESSING FACILITIES. THE ODDEST FACTOR OF ALL, HOWEVER, IS THE WAY THAT THE PRESIDENT APPEARS TO HAVE OVERLOOKED THE PROGRESS THAT WAS ALREADY BEING MADE TOWARD CHECKING PROLIFERATION BY THE ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL POWERS. THE NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP HAS BEEN MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT FOR TWO YEARS NOW AND NOT WITHOUT SUCCESS. THE CORRECT APPROACH IS TO INTENSIFY THESE INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSIONS AND BRING IN THE CUSTOMERS AS WELL AS THE SUPPLIERS. PRESIDENT CARTER, HOWEVER WELL INTENTIONED, HAS JUMPED THE GUN BY ACTING UNILATERALLY. HE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF, HOWEVER UNJUSTLY, THE U.S. IS ALSO SUSPECTED OF FURTHERING COMMERCIAL AIMS.

10. APRIL 14 "TIMES" STORY FROM ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT IS HEADED "CHANGE OF MIND BY MR. CARTER ON TOTAL PLUTONIUM BAN WAS CAUSED BY HOSTILE ALLIED RESPONSE." PRESIDENT CARTER'S RENUNCIATION OF THE DOMESTIC AMERICAN USE OF PLUTONIUM DID NOT GO ON AS EXPECTED TO DISCOURAGE OTHER NUCLEAR COUNTRIES FROM DOING SO. FOR BEING SO ACCOMMODATING, CRITICS WONDER WHETHER HIS NONPROLIFERATION POLICY IS NOT NOW SO CONFUSED BY INCONSISTENCY AS TO BE MEANINGLESS. IN ANY EVENT, AS STATED SO FAR, AMERICA'S INTERIM RENUNCIATION OF PLUTONIUM IS LIKELY TO HAVE A NEGLIGIBLE EFFECT ON PROGRAMS OF THE NUCLEAR "HAVES" SUCH AS BRITAIN. NEITHER

THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE WINDSCALE REPROCESSING PLANT NOR BRITAIN'S FAST BREEDER REACTOR ARE IN ANY WAY DEPENDENT ON AMERICAN MATERIEL OR TECHNOLOGY. ONLY IF THE UNITED STATES REFUSED PERMISSION FOR COUNTRIES SUCH AS JAPAN AND SPAIN TO HAVE THEIR AMERICAN-SUPPLIED FUEL, OR FUEL USED IN AN AMERICAN-SUPPLIED REACTOR, REPROCESSED IN BRITAIN COULD THERE BE ANY EFFECT. WHY THEN ALL THE FUSS AMONG NUCLEAR EXPERTS FROM TOKYO TO UNCLASSIFIED

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WASHINGTON? ESSENTIALLY, IT SEEMS THE EXPERTS SUSPECT THAT THERE IS MORE TO MR. CARTER'S POLICY THAN HE DISCLOSED LAST WEEK; THAT THE SECOND STEP, OF FIRST ASKING EVERYONE, THEN PRESSING THEM, TO FOREGO PLUTONIUM, MUST COME. MR. CARTER CERTAINLY CHANGED HIS MIND ON THIS ISSUE AFTER PRESSURE FROM AMERICA'S ALLIES LAST WEEK. CITING "TIME" MAGAZINE AS EVIDENCE OF THIS FACT, IT IS REPORTED THAT HE DID NOT CALL FOR A SIMILAR RENUNCIATION AT LEAST IN PART BECAUSE OF A TORNADO OF PROTESTS PARTICULARLY FROM THE WEST GERMANS AND THE JAPANESE WHEN THEY WERE SHOWN HIS DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT. THE BRITISH AND FRENCH GOVERNMENTS ALSO MADE CLEAR THEIR DISSATISFACTION. IT NOW SEEMS LIKELY MR. CARTER WILL INSTEAD PROPOSE STRENGTHENING PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSFERS OF NUCLEAR MATERIALS BETWEEN COUNTRIES. IF THE UNITED STATES WERE TO STRENGTHEN CONTROLS AND, SAY, REFUSE JAPAN PERMISSION TO CONTINUE REPROCESSING ITSELF OR TO SEND MATERIAL TO BRITAIN, THAT CONSTRAINT MIGHT SEEM INTOLERABLE. THE VERY STRUCTURE OF THE NPT MIGHT BE THE FIRST TO CRACK. THAT IS A GLOOMY HYPOTHESIS NOT JUSTIFIED AT ALL BY THE PRESENT EXPRESSION OF AMERICAN POLICY.

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** TECH, ENRG, PFOR, UK, US, (CARTER, JIMMY)  
**To:** STATE ERDA  
**Type:** TE  
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